

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A casting apparatus comprising:

a die which has an opening section above the die so as to pour a molten metal therefrom;

a heater which is disposed above the die;

a gas supplying section which supplies an inert gas to a surface of the molten metal;

and

a lid which is disposed between the surface of the molten liquid and an entirety of the heater during operation of the heater[[,]]; and

a lid moving structure which moves the lid relatively to the die and controls an opening amount of the opening section above the die.
2. (Original) A casting apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the lid moving structure adjusts the opening amount according to a flow amount of the inert gas.
3. (Original) A casting apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the lid moving structure has a structure for moving the lid relatively to the die vertically, horizontally, or rotatively.
4. (Original) A casting apparatus according to claim 1 wherein:

the molten metal is a molten silicon; and

at least a bottom surface of the lid is coated by a non-reactive material with a silicon oxide gas or a silicide.
5. (Cancel)